NUMB. XCVIII.

THE PLAIN DEALER.

——— Quid non Mortalia Pectora cogis,
Auri ſacra Fames! ——— VIRG.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 26. 1725.

THE Force of *Avarice*, and ſordid Thirſt of *Gold*, is never ſo conſpicuous, and ſo much to be wonder'd at, as when it taints the Minds of Perſons eminent in Quality and Circumſtance; and to this, further ſecured, as one would think, againſt all mean Temptations, by the large Revenues of a *State-Employment*. It is no ſuch great Matter of Surprize, when we ſee this Tincture of Covetouſneſs prevailing in a *Mechanick*, one whoſe Birth and Education are upon a Level; one, who has undergone a State of Servitude, and the Hardſhips of an Apprenticeſhip; who has learn'd to be ſcraping and penurious by Habit and Example; and who, by a Converſation with Dirt and ſervile Gain, makes the amaſſing a Fortune to be the chief End and Deſign of Life. But we expect other Views from a Generous Birth, and a Liberal Education: Sentiments ſuitable to the Dignity of Deſcent, and the Helps of Cultivation.

WE ſee, 'tis true, this *dirty* Paſſion too often *blotting* the *Eſcutcheons* of the Nobleſt Families: And we find at the ſame time our *Reſpect* for their *Quality* turn'd into a *Contempt* for their Perſons. But how much more deſpicable and ugly does this Vice appear, when we find it lodg'd in the Breaſt of Him, whoſe ſuppos'd Merit, and the Favour of his Prince, have raiſed to ſit and preſide in *Juſtice*? We attach Idea's of particular Veneration, to the Characters of Thoſe who are the *Oracles* of our *Laws*, and the *Diſpenſers* of *Equity*: We look upon them as the Storehouſes of Wiſdom and Superior Knowledge, and the Fountains of Integrity and unbyaſs'd Honour: And were they, as it is ſaid of the Old *Perſian* Emperors, to appear in Publick but once in Seven Years, the Vulgar, no doubt, would carry up their Reſpect to the Pitch of *Adoration*.

BUT our Deference for theſe Great Men is ſtrangely taken off, when we ſee contemptible Frailties breaking thro' their Grandeur: When they are ty'd up by no Regards to their Reputation, nor ſatisfied by the Incomes of their Preferments: but proſtitute the Sanctity of Honour and Conſcience, to Graſpings after Wealth, and unworthy Extorſion. My Lord *COKE*, I remember, ſomewhere ſpeaking of *Extortion* in a *Judge*, ſays, It is there worſe than Robbery: For *Robbery is apparent, and hath the Face of a Crime; but Extortion puts on the Viſor of Vertue for Expedition of Juſtice.*

IT is a very fine Aphoriſm, and worthy the Conſideration of all Ages and Countries, that, *Judex debet habere duos Sales; Salem Sapientiæ, ne ſit inſipidus; & ſalem Conſcientiæ, ne ſit Diabolus: A Judge ought to be ſeaſon'd with two Sorts of Salt; the Salt of* Wiſdom, *leſt he ſhould appear a* Fool, *and the Salt of* Conſcience, *leſt he ſhould appear a* Devil. I cannot help recollecting, upon this Occaſion, a Paſſage of *ÆLIAN*, who ſpeaking of the *Egyptians*, tells us, That they boaſted to have receiv'd their Syſtem of Laws from *Mercury*: And that their Judges, whenever they ſate upon the Deciſion of Cauſes, wore, hanging upon their Breaſts, by a Chain of Gold, a Saphire Image, which was call'd *Truth*: But, ſays the Author, I ſhould think it much better, that, inſtead of the *material* Image dangling at their *Boſoms*, they had the very *Eſſence* of It ſtampt on their *Souls*.

I WAS led into this Trace of thinking, by the Peruſal of thoſe Pamphlets which have lately been publiſh'd concerning the famous Lord *BACON*; and of another I met with lying in the Window of a *Member* of *Parliament*, which is call'd, The *CASE of ORPHANS, conſider'd from Antiquity*.

IT is pretty evident to me, with what View this Tract comes out at this Time of Day, and indeed, its Title Page tells us, That a Part of its Subject is, *On the Court of Chancery, having the Diſpoſition of Orphans Money*. As I obſerv'd ſome Paſſages in it, which enter cloſely into a Subject, now in every Body's Mouth, concerning the unreaſonable Truſt which has been put in the *Maſters* of *Chancery*, I ſhall take the Liberty of tranſcribing a few, and making them a Part of this Day's Entertainment.

I MUST

'I MUST *freely confeſs*, (ſays this Author) *it* 'was always my Opinion, That a Lord CHANCELLOR 'was a moſt proper Truſtee, *and* Guardian, *of the In-* 'tereſts of Orphans, *and* Widows. *I have not altoge-* 'ther retracted this Opinion, but I am ſo diffident of 'my own weak Judgment, that ſtrong Clamour, and ſtrong 'Arguments, perſwade me often not to be too poſitive or 'tenacious of my Sentiments. I am not ſo perfectly, me- 'thinks, reconcil'd to a CHANCELLOR, and his 'Maſters, having too intimate an Underſtanding with 'Each Other: And I begin to ſuſpect it a Degree of 'Harmony, in no wiſe eſſential to the Promotion of 'Equity.

'IT has been, as I am told, but by a very modern 'Order, that the Suiters Monies have been lodg'd in the 'Hands of the Maſters; and it may be to be wiſh'd 'that too many have not Cauſe to be ſorry an Order of that 'Kind ever took Place.

'THO' there be a loud Cry of Deficiency in the Suiters 'Money ſo lodg'd, I am not taking upon me to impeach 'the Characters of thoſe Gentlemen, but only to obſerve, 'That that Order ſeems to have been as abſurd and un- 'reaſonable, as it has prov'd unhappy in its Conſequen- 'ces. The Poſſeſſion of large Summs of Money, and 'the diſcretionary Power of approving what Securities 'they ſhall be plac'd out on, is a Truſt of ſuch a Kind as 'might debauch the Principles of Minds, not the moſt 'ſtrongly intrench'd in Honeſty, againſt the Aſſaults of 'Avarice and Advantage. It gives a Liberty, which I 'hope was never taken, of making Intereſt of that Money 'in which they have no Property, and for which they are, 'barely Truſtees; and at the ſame Time of not paying 'One Shilling of its Produce to the right Owners, under 'Colour that they have not had any proper Security pro- 'pos'd, upon which they could certify it ſafe and fitting to 'place it out.

'WERE there not the unhappy Deficiencies, which 'are at this Time talk'd of, I think ſeveral Caſes of Con- 'ſcience might ariſe upon the Poſſibility of the Maſters 'Conduct, with Regard to this Truſt. Suppoſe only, for 'Example, during the late unaccountable Fluctuation of 'Stocks, when the South-Sea Frenzy was at the Height, 'and Money yielded the Intereſt of a whole Year for 'the Loan of a few Hours, any immenſe Fortunes had 'been made by the clandeſtine Application of thoſe very 'Monies, for which no Securities could be found; or thoſe 'very Monies had been loſt in an unwarrantable Venture 'for private Profit: What Reparation ſhould have been 'made to the Suiters, or Orphans, whoſe Eſtates, in 'either Caſe, were ſo happily, or unhappily, employ'd? 'Would they have reap'd the Benefit of the firſt Stock- 'jobbing; or was there the leaſt Reaſon that they ſhould 'ſit down with the Loſs of the Latter? I make this but 'a Caſe of Suppoſition; and as it is ſcarce probable that 'the ſame Frenzy ſhould ever again poſſeſs us, yet ſhould 'it, the Wiſdom of our PARLIAMENT is providing, 'That the Monies of Orphans and other Suiters, en- 'gag'd in Chancery, ſhall not be ſubject to ſuch 'Hazards.

BUT ſo much for Quotation. As I have above-mention'd the Name of the Lord *Chancellor BACON*, who was accus'd by the Nation of *Bribery* and *Extortion*, I ſhall add a few Words here with Regard to his Conduct under that Accuſation. It has been reckon'd very ſingular in his Caſe, and He been look'd upon as a Man of many *Fears*, that he ſhould deſert his *Defence*, and, by a *Submiſſion* and *Confeſſion* of his Guilt, throw himſelf on the Favour of the Parliament. But my Lord *BACON*, who, as it has been obſerv'd, knew that all Wounds ake with laying open, and that Circumſtances are ſufficient to blaſt a Reputation, was reſolv'd to avoid the Hazard of publick Examination. It may very often be wiſer to carry Defects private, than to ſtand too peremptorily on a Juſtification; wherefore I look upon the Saying to be of great Weight, *That no Man has ſo many Faults, as he that takes upon him to have none at all.*

THIS puts me in Mind of a FABLE, that I read in my younger Years, and which I ſhall relate here, becauſe I am reſolv'd not to end with too much Gravity.

'THERE was a Knot of good Companions 'that enter'd into a Club, under certain Rules and 'Orders for the Government of the Society. One 'Article among the reſt, was, "That whoever ſhould "enroll himſelf a Member of that *Brotherhood*, with "any corporal *Maim*, or *Blemiſh* about him, ſhould "forfeit a Crown to the Board; and for ſo many De- "Defects, ſo many Crowns." It ſo fell out, that *one* 'Man in the Company was obſerv'd to go a little 'Limping, and ſo they call'd upon him for his *Forfeit*. 'The Man put himſelf upon the Teſt, and was found, 'upon the Search, to have not only one Leg longer 'than the other, but a *rank lep'rous Scurff* all over his 'Body. Upon this Diſcovery they demanded ano- 'ther Crown, and then another after That for a Glaſs- 'Eye he had. They preſs'd him in the End ſo hard 'for the Money, that it came to *Boxing*; and upon 'that Struggle, they found a Rupture he had got 'over and above: *So that the further they went, the* 'Matter was ſtill worſe and worſe.

To the Author of the PLAIN-DEALER.

SIR,

'THERE is a Converted *Jew*, baptiz'd in *Lon-* 'don in the Year 1686, in St. *Clement Danes* 'Church, by the Reverend Dr. *Haſcard*, then Rector 'and Dean of *Windſor*, to whom the Right Reverend 'Dr. *Henry Compton*, then Biſhop of *London*, ſtood 'Godfather: He is a moſt affectionate Subject to the 'Church and Government of *England*, and has been 'a Citizen of *London*, of the Drapers Company, 'ever ſince 1701; he was likewiſe a ſubſtantial 'Houſe-keeper for above Twenty Years, as will ap- 'pear by unqueſtionable Certificates of his conſtant 'good Behaviour ever ſince his Converſion, from Per- 'ſons of the beſt Character; but by Loſſes and Miſ- 'fortunes he is reduc'd to the laſt Extremities in his 'advanc'd Age, and deeply afflicted with other Cala- 'mities, after having ſacrific'd a comfortable Subſiſ- 'ſtance, and a conſiderable Fortune, for the Common 'Cauſe of Chriſtianity. As this unhappy Object is 'delivered up, even to the Condition of periſhing, he 'being reduc'd to be worſe than Nothing; therefore 'all good and pious Perſons are moſt earneſtly de- 'ſir'd to have Compaſſion on him, and their Charity 'will be receiv'd with the utmoſt Gratitude.

'THIS Convert may be heard of at Mr. *Knaplock's*, 'a Bookſeller in St. *Paul's Church yard*; at Mr. *Isbell's*, 'a Grocer near *Holbourn-Bars*; at Mr. *Prude's*, an 'Apothecary, at the Corner-Houſe by the New- 'Church in the *Strand*; and at Mr. *Feeſey's*, a Sword- 'Cutler in *Pall-Mall* near the *Hay-Market*; where full 'Satisfaction may be had in the above-mention'd 'Particulars. Pray favour us with the inſerting this 'Account in your *Paper*, and you will greatly oblige,

Feb. 23, 1725. *SIR,*

Your Readers and Friends,

J. B. T. M.

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